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# Palmerston North Tramping and Mountaineering Club Inc.

[www.pntmc.org.nz](http://www.pntmc.org.nz)

P.O. Box 1217, Palmerston North

## Newsletter May 2016

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*Looking out over Lake Matiri heading up to the 1000 Acre Plateau, Kahurangi NP [Warren Wheeler]*

### Club Nights

All are welcome to our club nights. These are held at **7:30pm** on the second and last Thursday of each month at the Society of Friends Hall, 227 College Street, Palmerston North.

**12 May**

**Fern the Whio Finder**

**Malcolm Swanney**

Postponed from last year.

Malcolm Swanney will tell us how he uses his Conservation Dog named Fern to help DOC monitor protected species such as whio and kiwi from his base in Raetehi.

**26 May**

**BYO Pics**

**Martin Lawrence**

Bring a selection of your best shots on a memory stick and tell us highlights of your recent trips over the last six months or so.

## Upcoming Trips

**1 May**

**Herepai Hut** **E/M**  
**Woody Lee** **357 2390**

A trip into the Tararuas behind Eketahuna. We will start from the Putara roadend and climb steadily up the hill after the second swing bridge. Bring your cup for a hot drink at the hut. Depart at 8am.

**7-8 May**

**Leon Kinvign Hut** **M**  
**Janet Wilson** **329 4722**

This western Ruahines trip takes us into the middle section of the Pohangina River. A good chance to see blue duck (whio) and help check the stoat traps there.

**8 May**

**Ridge Road Farm Walk** **M**  
**Dave Grant** **328 7788**

Thought I'd show you what has been keeping me busy for the past few months. We have a place on Ridge Road between the Pohangina and Oroua valleys from where we will do loop, walking over rolling hills, westward through a couple of neighbours properties along the Oroua escarpment, dropping down to the river, then back upstream, finally climbing back to the start through reverting scrubland. Should be 6 hours or so. If we are lucky Gaewyn will have made scones if you would like to stop at our house on the way home. Leave Milverton Park 7.30am.

**14/15 May**

**Deadmans/Rangi Variation** **M**  
**Terry Crippen** **356 3588**

A variation, up Deadmans track then into the stream, with some or a lot of bush bashing, and down to Rangi Hut for the night. Then walk out on Sunday. Depart about 7.30am Sat. phone terry on 027 643 3637.

**15 May**

**Rangi Hut** **E/M**  
**Martin Lawrence** **357 1695**

This is a delightful track up through beech and mountain cedar to the tussock tops of the western Ruahine Ranges, with great views to Ruapehu. Option to make a loop via the highpoint on Deadmans Track.

**21/22 May**

**Kaikoura Ranges** **M**  
**Annett Patzold** **021 189 4647**

Going to Kaikoura either Friday Night or Sat morning. Saturday morning from carpark at

road end (Parsons Road, Kaikoura) to Hapuku Hut. First 4 km of this trip will be along the Hapuku River stream bed (very wet feet). Sunday attempt Mt Uwerau via Hapuku Route and return the same way and day to road end. Will need to be an early start on Sunday to allow for enough daylight time for the river bed scramble in the afternoon.

**21/22 May**

**Gold Creek Hut** **M**  
**Geoff Phillips** **356 4223**

A hut we seldom visit in the north east of the Ruahine Forest Park, up the wide gravel Makaroro River then a nice easy bush walk up a spur to the hut.

**28-29 May**

**Triangle Hut** **M**  
**Graeme Richards** **353 6227**

This hut is in the upper Oroua River and readily accessed via the Rangi Hut track. A good chance to help check the stoat traps in this area.

**29 May**

**Te Mari Craters** **M**  
**Warren Wheeler** **356 1998**

This day trip takes us to see the steaming craters on the northern side of Mount Tongariro. Hopefully they will be quiet enough for a close look. Depart 6.30am.

**3-6 June**

**Queens Birthday Weekend**  
**White Island** **M**  
**Janet Wilson** **329 4722**

The idea is to leave on Friday to make it a nice long weekend. We then take the boat to White Island on Saturday and spend the rest of the weekend in the BOP or Rotorua doing other thermal activity things. If you are keen to go then contact Janet pronto so bookings can be confirmed.

**5 June**

**Otangane Loop** **M**  
**Peter van Essen** **355 9076**

Come and explore this area behind Harding's Park where secret gnomes have constructed a loop track south around the upper true left branch of the Otangane Stream. This makes a good day trip from the Kahuterawa road-end via the Sledge Track. This newish loop track means a lot less scrub bashing than in the past to get to a couple of high points that give views out to the east. Depart 7am, back mid to late afternoon.

Oops, nearly forgot, the overtly opulent outlook of the Otangane will ostensibly override our

old-age osteoporosis so lets organize ourselves, overcome our oscillations over opposing options, and seize the opportunity on offer on this occasion.

**11/12 June**  
**Ruapehu Climbing** **F/T**  
**Grant Christian** **354 5843**

My preference is to climb on the Pinnacles but if the weather looks better somewhere else on the mountain the plans will change. You will need to have completed the Snowcraft courses. A chance to practice your belaying skills.

**12 June**  
**Forks Hut** **M**  
**Craig Allerby** **323 7913**

Depart 8am. A rarely visited backcountry hut in the south western Ruahines. The first part of the trip follows a farm road to the bush edge. We then follow a track through native forest to Forks Hut for lunch. Return the same way as in.

**Trip Grading**

Trip grades depend on many factors, especially weather and terrain. A reasonably proficient trampers should expect to do the trips in the following times:  
 Easy (E): 3-4 hrs  
 Medium (M): 5-6 hrs  
 Fit (F): about 8 hrs  
 Fitness Essential (FE): over 8 hrs  
 Other grades:  
 Technical skills (T)  
 Instructional (I)

**Trip participants**

Contact the leader at least 3 days in advance. Trips leave from Milverton Park. A charge for transport will be collected on the day.

**Gear for trips**

Minimum gear for day trips is appropriate footwear, pack, lunch and snacks, waterproof jacket, overtrousers, gloves, warm hat, torch, toilet paper, matches or a lighter, sunblock, first aid kit, and a survival bag or space blanket. Each person needs to be equipped to survive overnight.

**Personal Locator Beacons – Free for trips**

The club has purchased two PLBs for members' use. If you want to take one of these on a trip, contact Martin or Anne Lawrence on 357-1695. Note that this applies to any trip you are going on - it doesn't need to be a club trip.

**Trip leaders**

Complete the trip intentions form and leave with one of Overdue Trip Contacts or drop into 44 Dahlia St or email to [pntmctrips@gmail.com](mailto:pntmctrips@gmail.com) with the

date and trip name in the subject line. If you are unable to run your trip as scheduled, advise a trip coordinator as soon as possible so that alternatives can be arranged.

**Overdue Trips**

If a club trip is late returning, please do not worry unduly as there is probably a good reason for the delay. If you are in any doubt, please phone one of the Overdue Trip Contacts:

Janet Wilson 329-4722  
 Martin and Anne Lawrence 357-1695  
 Terry Crippen 356-3588

**Articles for the newsletter**

Send by the 20<sup>th</sup> of each month to Warren Wheeler, the newsletter editor, direct or via our web site <http://www.pntmc.org.nz/mail/>

**Notices**

**PNTMC AGM – Committee Changes**

Thanks to all the club members who attended the AGM on 14 April. Election of Officers resulted in a number of changes. Anne Lawrence stood down as Secretary and was elected Vice President. Terry Crippen was elected the new Secretary. Grant Christian joins the Committee while Craig Allerby, Malcolm Parker and Geoff Phillips decided to stand down – thanks for your service to the club.

Bruce van Brunt continues as President – his President's Report 2015-16 is included in this Newsletter.

Warren Wheeler also continues as Treasurer, as do the other Committee Members: Janet Wilson, Woody Lee, Martin Lawrence, Nick Allen.

It was also agreed that club nights should start at 7.30pm instead of 7.45pm and it was also decided that the subs would stay the same as last year.

**Subs are Now Due - there are two options.**

1. Normal Sub: Newsletter received as hard copy via the post.
2. E-Sub: Newsletter received electronically via our website.

Subscription	Individual	Family
Normal Sub	\$35	\$40
E-Sub	\$25	\$30

- E-Sub includes \$10 for FMC affiliation.
- You will receive an FMC membership card that entitles you to various discounts, including 30% off the DOC Annual Hut Pass.
- Each FMC card is valid for only one person so if you are paying a Family Sub please add \$10 if you require an extra FMC card.

Please pay directly at a club night to Warren Wheeler, Treasurer

Or

Post your cheque (made out to "PNTMC") to PNTMC, PO Box 1217, Palmerston North 4440

Or

Deposit on-line to our Westpac bank account: 030 726 0485 393 00.

## Snowcraft Programme



It's about time winter arrived - we want plenty of snow! PNTMC's Snowcraft Programme starts in August this year. It has two aims:

- to equip people with the necessary skills for safe tramping in snow; and
- to pass on the fundamental skills of mountaineering.

It will be running as day trips to Mt Ruapehu with an evening session mid-week prior to each day trip.

10 Aug Wed evening 13 or 14 August	SC1 Intro and briefing SC1 Mt Ruapehu
24 Aug Wed evening 27 or 28 August	SC2 Briefing & intro to rope work SC2 Mt Ruapehu
7 Sept Wed evening 10 or 11 Sept	SC3 Briefing & rope work SC3 Mt Ruapehu

## Snowcraft Fees

The fees for each of SC1, SC2, SC3 are: \$60 if PNTMC member, or \$70 if non-member. These cover weeknight venues, day transport, group gear hire, and instruction. Individual gear hire, if needed, is an additional cost for non PNTMC members.

Pass the word round to friends you may think are interested.

## Applications Close 4 August

Applications (returned application form and fee) close Thursday 4 August. Application forms will soon be available on the Snowcraft link at [www.pntmc.org.nz](http://www.pntmc.org.nz) or on the noticeboard at Club Night.

For more info contact Terry Crippen 356-3588 or 027 643 3637; or Bruce van Brunt 328-4761.

## PNTMC Jubilee Book

*Old Boots & Packs - The First 50 Years of the Palmerston North Tramping and Mountaineering Club (PNTMC)* will interest and amuse mountain users, historians, photographers, hut baggers and tree huggers. Read about current and past members' exploits, which include climbing our highest peaks (sometimes with boots on the wrong feet) and powering a car on white spirits cooking fuel.



Order your copies directly from the editor Doug Strachan 353-6526 and get ready to put your feet up with this great read, all for only \$35.

(Also makes a nice gift to friends and family who might otherwise wonder why you enjoy tramping so much!)

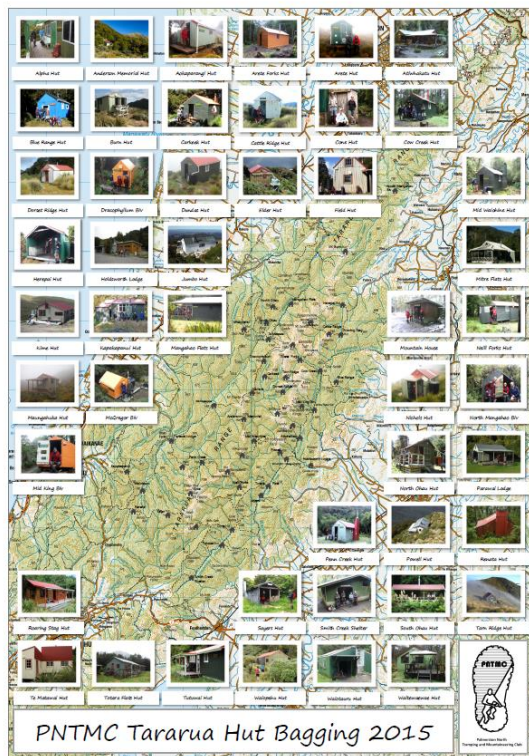
## Otaki Forks Road Still Closed

You may already be aware that the Otaki Forks Road has been closed due to a slip on Blue Bluff, 13km from SH1. The slip area is unstable with large cracks high above the road. Work has begun on removing some 45,000 cubic metres of material and the road is likely to be open in two or three months before winter sets in.

An alternative access track has been opened by DOC and goes well above the slip site, starting at Shields Flat Historic Reserve carpark. It climbs 300m up and down to the road again, with a DOC time of 2 hours for the 5.1 km to get to Otaki Forks.

Road Closure updates are on the web; Google "Otaki Forks Road Closed" or similar. There is a link there to the DOC website, which has a map and other track information.

## Tararua Hut Bagging Poster



Size	Members	Non Members
A2	\$8	\$12
A1	\$16	\$24

Post and tube is about \$15 extra depending on where it is being sent.

Also available is a similar Ruahine Poster.

Sale proceeds go towards our maintenance of Mid-Pohangina and Ngamoko Huts.

Contact Warren 356-1998.

## Congratulations

Congratulations to our Auditor (aka Accounts Reviewer) Don French for being made a Life Member of the NZAC (see latest FMC Bulletin for more details). Don is a well known mountaineer based in Masterton. He gave us a talk not so long ago about the 100 Peak Challenge, which he has now completed.

## New Members

Welcome to Anthony Behrens and Fiona Burleigh who join us having helped out a lot on the Oroua Stoa Lines.

Anthony also did the final print layout for our Jubilee Book.

After joining the club he was nominated onto the FMC Executive Committee, along with John Beech (MTSC President) so we are now well served by local representatives.

## AGM Presidents Report

### Palmerston North Tramping and Mountaineering Club

#### President's Report April 2016

This year our club has passed a significant milestone. We are now 50 years old and this birthday gives cause for some brief reflection. I am honoured to be the president of the club and I feel especially privileged to hold this office during its 50th year.

We must remember that a major rôle of our club is to provide a platform whereby people interested in tramping and climbing can meet, discuss, plan and participate in tramping and climbing related activities. Another rôle is to introduce people to new outdoor experiences. Yet another rôle is to work with the general community to promote tramping and offer our

expertise. We hope that, somehow, in all this we have a lot of fun.

The success of our club during a given year can be measured in part by our activities, and it is on these outward signs that I focus. It is my pleasure to present the 50th President's report.

### **Membership**

The membership of our club is generally quite stable from year to year. The membership for 2014-2015 was recorded at 74. This year, the membership is 62. This number includes 13 family memberships. The counting I believe has changed here, but roughly we have the same size membership given that a family membership usually means at least two individuals are participating with the club. (In fact if we count all family members there would be 77.) This year, we welcomed 4 new members into the club.

### **Activities**

PNTMC has been engaged in many activities this year including a range of evening talks, club trips and instruction focussed activities. I will speak on these below, but here I wish to note two highlights of the year that are more anomalous.

#### **Highlight 1 - the Hut Bagging Challenge**

This challenge was started in the previous year and finished at the end of June. Following in the footsteps of the Ruahine hut bagging challenge and the peak challenge, the focus here shifted to the Tararuas. I think by all measures this challenge was a success. It got our members into the local hills and raised the profile of our club. We had a good turnout for this challenge and the enthusiasm was infectious. Like the Ruahine hut bagging challenge, the prodigious efforts of our members resulted in a Tararua hut poster to complement our Ruahine hut poster. These posters are clearly popular outside our club as evidenced by a constant stream of sales. Special thanks go to Janet Wilson for organizing and administering this challenge, and to Martin Lawrence for creating the poster. Of course thanks also go to all the participants.

#### **Highlight 2 - the 50th Jubilee**

This was an enormously successful event that brought members from around the country together for a memorable weekend. I wish once again to thank the Jubilee committee (David Grant, Peter Darragh, Terry Crippen, Doug Strachan and Martin Lawrence) for all the hard work over several months that made

this event such a success. A feature of this event was the publication of the book "Old Boots and Packs". A special thanks to Doug Strachan for editing and contributing much material. His research and work on this book spanned many years.

### **Club Evenings**

Our club manages on a regular basis to get a wonderful variety of talks about places all over the globe leavened with local trips. This year was no exception. The year started with a tour of the Southwest USA, then cycling in France. These talks were followed by the Bibbulmun track in Australia, a trip along the Mekong river, and a visit to Tasmania. We got to hear about carnivorous plants in Australia, a climb of Kilimanjaro and the Pacific Crest Track in the USA. This was a delightful world tour. It always amazes me just how active our members are overseas.

Talks with a local flavour included Wild and Wet Westland, the Ball Pass, Tales from the Tararuas. The year ended near home with talks about the Heaphy and D'Archiac.

Club nights were also used for other social activities. In particular we had two end of year BBQ's, two BYO slide nights, and a night on navigation. The club photo competition was held in August and well subscribed by members. Special thanks go to Martin Lawrence and Nick Allen for helping to organize the images and judges. The winners went on to the interclub competition held in September, where we made a respectable show. Well done PNTMC photographers. Thanks also to Martin and others for organizing the events and publicity.

Thanks are given to all the speakers and organizers of these nights. It is surely a good sign that we can consistently field such a spectrum of social activities.

### **Club Trips**

A considerable suite of tramps/climbs was offered to cater to the diverse interests of members. Activities included long and short trips in the Ruahine and Tararua ranges, climbing/tramping trips in Tongariro and Egmont National Parks. Activities included climbing, tramping and mountain biking. With the hut bagging challenge ending in June and focussed on the Tararuas, there were a healthy number of Tararua trips early in the year.

Trips were also on offer to Mt Owen, Mt Travers, and Tarawera among other places.

Here are some quick statistics thanks to Warren:

- For the period 1 March 2015 to 29 February 2016 we had 103 day and overnights trips of which 41% DNG.
- Average No. of people on a Day Trip was 4.7 excluding the Jubilee or 5.4 including the Jubilee.
- Average No. of people on Overnight trips was 3.8.
- The largest number on a day trip was 19 for the Jubilee trip up No.1 Line.

The hills are populated with PNTMC members. We are a very active club. The trips that did not go (the DNGs) are perhaps more a reflection of the weather. Looking at the trip records, the DNGs seem to come in lumps for certain months.

Thanks are due to all the trip leaders, who made these trips possible. Special thanks are due to Janet Wilson and Terry Crippen, who organized the trip cards. It is no small feat to gather trip leaders and craft a trip programme that balances easy, moderate, fit trips along with day and overnight trips.

### **Instruction**

A key rôle of the club is to teach people tramping and climbing skills. This year we held three Snowcraft courses. Over the last few years the trend was to have these courses as long day trips to Ruapehu. This year we in fact had two overnight trips and combined Snowcraft 1 and 2 owing to inclement weather on the date set for Snowcraft 1. The courses were based at Ruapehu near the ski fields. Each course was supplemented by an evening session in Palmerston North. I would like to thank Terry Crippen for all his work organizing the Snowcraft courses. I would also like to thank the instructors Grant Christian and Dwight Swainson for all their help. Finally, I would like to thank Barney Hyde and his family for the generous use of their bach near Ohakune and for more than one great meal.

Aside from Snowcraft instruction, the club also had a navigation instruction night in February. Thanks go to Graham Peters for running this course on short notice.

Over the years our club has supported members attending specialized courses run by independent groups. Such courses included first aid and avalanche awareness among other topics. We secured funding last year to

subsidize members who wished to attend first aid and avalanche awareness courses. Unfortunately, the targeted outdoor first aid provider no longer offered the course. We are currently exploring options. Fortunately we were able to send two members to an avalanche awareness course.

### **Newsletter**

The newsletter is perhaps the most prominent manifestation of our activities. I am happy to see that this publication has grown from strength to strength. We have consistently produced a balanced newsletter with variety, good photographs, and useful news. It is here you can find news on trips, trip reports, recipes, gossip, book reviews, among other items. It is a big job editing this newsletter and we owe Warren Wheeler a big vote of thanks. We should also thank the numerous writers and photographers that help make this a success.

Here are some observations:

#### **Curious headlines/titles**

“Te Matawai (Sex and Tramping)”...once you read the title you have to read the story.

“Murders at Franz Josef Glacier”... a book review for a murder mystery

“Not Nothofagus”...news about the reclassification of beech trees

“How to Spot a Stoat”...informative

“Leatherwood Study”...this is a ‘scholarly, scientific article’ resplendent with equations.

“Whio Trio Strikes Again”...you have to see the picture to really appreciate this one.

“Notorious Ngawhakarara”...I cannot do justice to Peter’s trip blurb. It is full of clever alliteration as the author tries hard to sell the trip to the prospective trumper.

Although all clubs are concerned about their aging membership, we can sport two trip reports written by members under the age of 10. Conan Strachan (aged 8) has made two contributions to the newsletter this year.

On the back of the newsletter, David Grant is listed as the vice president. In fact, this year we elected no vice president. As president, I did not notice this until the end of the year. Did anyone else?

There was an alarming crescendo of Tramping Song lyrics creeping into the newsletter.

### **Website**

The PNTMC website is in many ways the “public face” of the club. This website has been constructed over several years and has become a valuable resource for members and the public. The website now contains a lot of

archival material (useful for presidents who forget where they left their newsletters) along with other material.

More and more this site is becoming a one stop place to learn about the club and access material such as newsletters, hut information and contacts. There are other resources on this site such as photos and Tony's Tararuas.

The construction, maintenance and updating of this site is largely the effort of the webmasters Peter Wiles and Martin Lawrence. We owe them a big vote thanks for all of this hard work putting PNTMC on the cyber map and keeping it there.

### **Our Huts**

Our club is responsible for the upkeep of Ngamoko and Mid Pohangina huts. We have taken this obligation seriously and have had several visits to the huts with a view towards keeping these huts tidy and useable. Some visits have been integrated into club trips, others have been linked with activities such as stoat trapping. One need only turn to the February and April 2016 newsletters to get a flavour of what is being done for these huts by club members and their friends. As a club we are committed to the upkeep of these huts; however, I note that there is certainly a small core group that is actually doing the work.

We have established a hut maintenance fund that is growing through hut fees and poster sales.

### **Community and Outside Activities**

Several of our members engaged in activities related to tramping that helped the community. We have members contributing their time and experience to SAR, FMC, MSC and NZAC activities among other things. Thanks to everybody for these wonderful contributions. Here, I wish to note more specifically the following activities:

Whio Protection: Our membership is involved significantly in Whio Protection thanks largely to the prodigious efforts of Janet Wilson.

Ruahine User Group: This group deals with matters of great interest to our club. It is important that we have some presence here. Thanks go to Janet Wilson and Anne Lawrence for their participation with this group and keeping PNTMC abreast of developments that impact tramping in the Ruahines.

DoC Conservancy Board: Anne Lawrence has served on this board for a few years giving input into DoC decisions and keeping our club informed of relevant developments.

Mastering Mountains: Our club member Nick Allen has spearheaded a scholarship fund to assist people with Multiple Sclerosis get outdoors. I am happy to say that PNTMC has supported Nick in this endeavour.

### **Acknowledgements**

We all know that it is the members of a club that makes it what it is. Our success this year is due the efforts of the members. It is to them that I give thanks first.

Although administration is seldom a glamorous task, this work needs to be done to ensure a smooth running club. The committee has been instrumental in the operation of the club. This group met monthly to discuss all matters pertaining to the running of the club and helped plan various strategies for the club's direction. It is from this group, for example, that a programme of speakers and the trip cards come into being and decisions on gear purchases are made. This is where, as a club, we respond to various proposals from DoC and suggestions from the FMC.

I gratefully acknowledge the enormous help given to me by all the members of the committee: thank you Warren Wheeler, Terry Crippen, Janet Wilson, Martin Lawrence, Anne Lawrence, Craig Allerby, Malcolm Parker, Woody Lee, Nick Allen and Geoff Phillips.

Bruce van Brunt  
President PNTMC  
12 March 2016

## **Trip Reports**

**19-20 March 2016**

**Toka Biv (shh... It's a Secret!!)**

**Lindsay Middleton**

Geoff Phillips phoned to ask me if I would like to come with him on a tramp in a couple of weekend's time – it would be really helpful as this club trip had no takers so far. He thought that it was not likely to be well patronised, and I could help by providing transport. This one was just local, and overnight - the weekend before Easter. But where to? I didn't know the location of this bivvy, but I could find it on the map of the Ruahines. So it transpired that Geoff and I went to the Toka Bivvy on 19/20th March. And here is the makings of the dilemma – here is a standard Forest Service 2-man bivvy in a delightful location, readily accessible from Palmerston North – and no



one seems to want to go there. Or is it because it is a well-kept secret?

We left PN after midday on Saturday, and drove to the Heritage Lodge carpark off Petersons Road on Table Flat beyond Apati, planning ahead to leave the vehicle there for next day when we descended off Tunupo. We road-walked 5 km to the end of Limestone Road, continued beyond the road-end carpark, along the marked track over farmland, and headed into the Forest Park. At first the tracks are particularly well marked, probably for use by education groups using the nearby Sixtus Lodge. Once the track crosses to the opposite side of the stream, it is less well used, although with adequate track markers. From the stream, it ascends directly up the side of the ridge to a saddle, and then continues up the ridge through the beech forest. The track continues to ascend to where kaikawaka and leatherwood are present, and then breaks out of the bush to alpine shrubs and tussock.

Geoff and I were well favoured with warm weather and very much enjoyed the tramp up towards the top of the range, with great views over the Forest Park and Manawatu farmland. A small dilemma - in the mild conditions, we were rapidly depleting our water supply. A cap of clouds crowned the range. Beyond the top of Toka, where there are no track markers, we looked carefully to follow the route, now not so obvious because of infrequent use. At one point the route seems to proceed forward and down off the end of the ridge, but the actual route drops down the right side of the ridge to continue along the top of the range. A brief lift of the cloud confirmed the correct route. A GPS-enabled phone with a topographical map proved useful for pinpointing our position in the cloud, and clarifying navigating decisions.

Starting from Palmerston North after midday, and then adding the roadwalk, meant that we arrived at the turnoff to the bivvy at about sunset. With cloud still hugging the range, we were pleased to find the three waratah standards marking the turnoff. In fading daylight, thinning cloud cover, increasing moonlight, and finally with torches, we made our way to the bivvy. The route from the top of the ridge follows the top of the spur closely – the track is overgrown with tussock, and tricky to follow. The turnoff to the bivvy is at the point where the spur drops to a small saddle – the bivvy is not seen from above while descending the track, but comes into view from the small saddle, about 200m to the left.

Toka Biv, as a large sign attached to its side proudly proclaims, is well worth a visit. It is nestled in amongst tussock and leatherwood on a mossy terrace well sheltered from the prevailing winds. The terrace is an interesting wetland area with several pretty little tarns. There is plenty of water available, but the bivvy has no tank water - we took the precaution of boiling water from the tarns. Furthermore, there is no toilet. The bivvy itself has withstood its lonely life perched above the bushline remarkably well, but at this stage it is in need of some tender care to restore it to peak condition: the floor slopes slightly – evidence of the soft ground; the hut log book refers to a roof leak; nails are rusting. Geoff and I entertained ourselves bouncing ideas for remedying these problems – what would it take to refurbish this little bivvy as a destination for future use? Any improvements will add to the attraction of visiting, and so this little mountainside best-kept secret may become better known. The log book confirms that the bivvy is not often visited – installed in 2013, the entries for the last three years total 5 pages.

We had a lazy start next morning – a great place to be, so why hurry away? The route back up the spur to the top of the Ngamoko Range is easier to follow up hill – you can see the track more clearly under the overhanging tussock than coming down from above. Once on top, we turned north towards Tunupo (1568m), enjoying the mild conditions and magnificent views over Manawatu and Southern Hawkes Bay. There is a steep-sided gendarme on the final approach to the top of Tunupo, which we circumnavigated by sidling around on the east side. A suitable route around the gendarme is to start from the saddle at the bottom of the final approach, sidle across tussock to the east-facing spur off Tunupo, and ascend that spur directly to the top. We ate lunch, lounging in the tussock below the summit, feeling spoiled by the warmth of the sun and the marvellous view.

While we were approaching from the south, we were intrigued to see a solitary trapper frozen in place just below the summit of Tunupo. On close inspection, it proved to be a recently installed high tech solar panel, battery and electronics setup. But what is it? An i-phone charging device to get the next generation motivated for tramping the ranges? Not!

We descended the track and made the short detour to Heritage Hut to quench our considerable thirsts. From there we walked out

to the vehicle, pleased that we had done the road walk on the previous day, and returned to Palmerston North, very satisfied with the overnight tramp.

We think that this little bivvy does not deserve to deteriorate into disrepair and disuse. If you think that you may be able to contribute to its restoration, then please discuss your ideas with Geoff. And give some thought to this dilemma – should Toka Bivvy remain a secret?

**24-28 March 2016**

### **Thousand Acre Plateau**

**Report by Derek Sharp, Kathy Corner and Grant Christian**

#### **From Derek**

We had an exciting start to our Easter trip with the flight from Paraparaumu to Nelson with Sounds Air, a 12-seater plane, great views of the Sounds. We then had to hunt for our hire car. There had been a huge amount of rain the night before and consequently there was a lot of mud and water around the grassy car park at the airport. Two women and their young children had got firmly stuck in the mud, so the boys and I came to the rescue and managed to push the car out and they were very grateful. We stayed in Murchison in a cabin and saw how fast flowing and up the river was.

Soon after leaving the car we meet the farmer, who warned that we probably would not be able to cross the Matiri West Branch after all the heavy rain that they had experienced. This uncertainty was quickly followed up by Warren wanting to discuss alternative places to visit, but after being rebuffed by Grant, we headed off to see for ourselves how bad this crossing would be. Yes, the river was definitely up, coloured and flowing fast. Although I (Derek) found a couple of potential crossings, I couldn't convince anyone else of their merit, and not wishing to cross by myself, I settled for Warren's suggestion. A feisty discussion on the best crossing method (holding shoulder straps above the packs or down near waist level between pack and back) and order (shortest last or second to last) then ensued, and after a compromise between the two most vocal protagonists, we waded through.

Soon we were sidling around Lake Matiri, with me dreaming of swimming over still, deep water... although the lake looked rather muddy with all the silty flood water, my enthusiasm wasn't sullied and I promised myself a swim on the return. On passing Lake Matiri Hut I decided that dumping the dinner for five, which

I was carrying, would be an excellent idea and so carefully stashed the food away with a note to warn others off.

Climbing up to the Thousand Acres Plateau was hot, steady work, broken by a lunch stop part way up. Yet again I made the most of the opportunity to lighten my pack by handing out crackers, cheese and lime pickle. Farther on, we passed through a flat area at 800m which fascinated me. It was the first time that I have walked through dracophyllum dominated bush. We also passed a number of bright blue fungi and plenty of bird life. Nearing the crest of the plateau we passed through large blocks of siltstone that gave the area a similar morphology to limestone. The geology of the area surprised me, as I have always assumed that the plateau was made of limestone. And I saw none. My guess is that the siltstones uniform composition and permeability allows for similar surface weathering to that of limestone. Upon reaching the Plateau, extensive views of broad, flat, tussock land stretched out for kilometres around us, all skirted by vertical bluffs 100m high.



*First views of Needle and Haystack [WW]*

Poor Pete's Hut has recently been renovated and is a cosy, but roomy, two person biv with an all-weather veranda housing a picnic table. The two occupants upon seeing us and hearing that there were more to come, soon fled the hut for Larrikin's.

It was an enjoyable and pleasant change for me to have finished the day so relatively early around 4pm, and to be able to relax in good company, enjoying the surrounds. Maybe a little too early for Warren, as he continued exploring the vicinity over the next hour. Tents were pitched, dinner had, a Doom Delight (?) pudding consumed while distant thunder rumbled. Soon all were settled in sleeping bags, listening to night sounds of moreporks, stags and frogs (though I swear all I heard was moreporks and crickets).

### From Kathy

The 3 hour walk to our next campsite was excellent over the plateau with views of the bluffs, the Needle and the Haystack as the peaks are called. Warren and I wandered slowly taking lots of photos Derek was raring to go when we arrived as he could not wait to go racing up the Needle and Haystack.



*Larrikans Hut below The Haystack [WW]*

I elected to stay behind and explore the waterfall and river. Soon after the boys left it started raining so I lay in my tent reading the Listener. Apparently it hailed up the top.

We had another night of Doom Pudding – I think the recipe definitely needs adjustments! I don't think I will eat potato flakes again without remembering this pudding. Ask Warren for the recipe!!

Our last night was back at Lake Matiri. Derek and I had a wonderful swim across the lake and back. I did not think it was too cold but Warren piked out and said it was too cold!! So we left Grant, Geoff and Warren getting bitten away by sandflies on the shore. Despite Derek wanting to camp by the lake we elected to sleep in the hut as the sandflies were just tooooo much. As far as culinary delights the final night's tea was the best- chick pea curry or palak paneer - wonderful! And of course lots of chocolate!

### From Grant

It took me a while to realise that the names of these two peaks went together. I don't think I had read the names or heard them talked about together so it was always The Needle this, The Haystack that but never The Needle and The Haystack.

After pitching our tents the four of us headed off to climb The Haystack at least. There was a short climb up to a higher plateau and then a steep climb up to the ridge that lead to the high

point on The Haystack. While walking along the ridge we heard a loud noise and realised there was a very heavy rain storm approaching. It was mostly hail that reached us and it didn't last very long.



*Hail on the Haystack Ridge [WW]*

Cloud conditions were changeable and we did get some good views. We continued along the ridge which included a couple of interesting rock steps to negotiate and reached the peak.



*Some interesting rock steps to negotiate [WW]*

After a brief stop on the top we returned the way we had come and carried on along the ridge to The Needle, apart from Geoff who chose to head back to the hut.



*Along the ridge to the Needle [WW]*

This was a straight forward but short steep climb at the end. Derek & I searched for a

more challenging route up through the rock bluffs but they proved too difficult. On top we had great views into the next valley and the surrounding plateau. We headed down the other side of the peak and along the ridge where we dropped down the steep slope to the plateau below us. From here we made our way across the plateau and back to the hut.



*Looking to the south from the Needle [WW]*

We later walked up to the bluffs and waterfalls behind the campsite which were below The Haystack. That evening we had a good view over the other campers, of which there were many, and enjoyed dinner while observing their activities. Kathy has already mentioned the doom pudding, which we endured on two nights. As I said to Warren "I can't recommend it highly enough". Kathy must take some of the credit for that because dessert was their joint responsibility.



*To the top of Larrikans Creek waterfall [WW]*

The next morning we visited the nearby waterfall below the campsite. We could get to the top of the waterfall and peer down to the bottom a few hundred feet below, if game enough to do that. We enjoyed the view and tried estimating the distance to the bottom by timing how long it took rocks to reach the bottom. I'm not sure that anyone had a good enough grip on the maths or precise timing to give an accurate estimate.

The drive back to Nelson was leisurely with a couple of stops on the way.

Trip participants: Grant Christian, Warren Wheeler, Geoff Phillips, Kathy Corner & Derek Sharpe.

### **3 April 2016 Leary Farm Walk Sally Hewson**

It looked to be a dismal weekend, but four of us still rocked up to the Leary's house for the farm walk. After picking up Malcolm we headed out into the wop wops of West Hunterville. We spent a pleasant morning walking on the Leary's hill country farm. Malcolm had lots of intriguing stories of the history of the area, and the colourful characters that had worked in the area in the past. Us townies also learnt a bit about the rural world. On the high point of the property we had great views, tho' the mountains were obscured by the murk. It was tipping down to the north, but the weather gods smiled on us, and we remained dry. Malcolm said we would take a short cut back to the car (which was more of a long cut) which took us past a very old derelict school house. Back at the car we grabbed our lunches, and found a nice spot to munch and enjoy the view.



*Farm views for lunch.*

Then it was back to Malcolm and Edith's place where we had fun picking heaps of delicious mushrooms from the paddock adjacent to the house. We rounded off the trip with a hot drink, and a piece of scrummy chocolate cake, courtesy of Malcolm's daughter and Edith.

Those on the trip were: Malcolm Leary, Warren Wheeler, Grant and Vicky Christian and Sally Hewson.

**16-17 April 2016**  
**Kaweka Foray**  
**Bruce van Brunt**

The glass was high, at least for Saturday, and Sunday promised at least tolerable weather: there was slender reason not to do this trip. The plan was to access the Kaweka tops from the Lakes Carpark via the Rogue Ridge, follow the tops over such memorable peaks as the Tits and eventually make our way to Studholme Saddle biv. It was intended that the next day we would follow the tops to Castle Camp and on to Kiwi Saddle hut. We would then follow the track over Kuripapango back to the carpark. This is a very manageable overnight trip with a lot of scenic tops travel. There were but two of us on this trip, myself and Kathy Corner.

We left Ashhurst around 6:45am on Saturday and made the long drive to the Lakes Carpark off of the Napier-Taihape Road. We were walking just before 10am along the old access road towards Macintosh Hut. After a disheartening 90m drop to the first stream (640m), we decided to keep our boots dry and cross the first (and only significant) stream in our plastic hut shoes. We promptly met (about 10:30am) some exceedingly fit person who had run around the entire loop from Kuripapango in the morning hours. This fellow raced up Kuripapango, went to Kiwi Saddle Hut, then ran around the tops to the high point (Kaiahari, 1507m) and down the Mackintosh spur. Prima facie, it was encouraging that these tracks were "so good" he could run them in fantastic times. I just felt wildly out of shape having done some of this before and knowing the effort needed to make such great progress. This was my first overnight trip since early January.

We grunted up another 200m to get to the junction with the Rogue Ridge (nicely marked with the metal signs particular to the Kawekas) and then started the climb up to the tops. The ridge ends at about 1100m and then there is a delightful path along the tops. Much of the forest on this side of the park is invasive pine stuff, but once on the tops, it is muted by the incredible views in all directions. We ate lunch and chose to look either at the ocean and Cape Kidnappers, or perhaps glance towards Ruapehu. The stunted pine forest soon died out to leave us on a pleasant track on the tops. The vegetation here is minimal and walking is pleasant. Even the slopes are modest. I always enjoy the novelty of seeing where my feet are placed, no mud, and not too many ups and downs.

The first major peak to climb is called "The Tits". How this feature got this name remains a mystery to me. Having now seen it from various angles, I am perplexed why this high point, among all others, received this appellation. Perhaps it was a very lonely explorer/tramper/hunter in earlier days. Neither Kathy nor I could see any reason for this name, but hey, we climbed the Rogue, over the Tits and went on towards Mad Dog Hill, with Studholme biv and hut somewhere below. The names are colourful here.

There was a vague plan to climb up Mad Dog Hill and ease our way to Kaweka-J, but in reality when we got to the signed turnoff to the biv I was more tempted by a hot cup of coffee than climbing another 300m and then returning in late evening to the biv. Kathy had more energy than me, but I convinced her of the merits of a civilized arrival time at the biv. We then went down an annoying 200m slope to the biv.

The turnoff to the biv is well signed. It starts OK but then quickly steepens. There are poles to guide you on a rather obvious line of descent. The track is pretty good (albeit steep near the biv) except at the very end (last 5min) when it dissolves into some light scrub. It is OK if you are going down; however, it is more problematic if you are going up and unfamiliar with the route. At any rate, a careful scan from the stream for poles higher up near the slip will see you through (along with a bit of patience for a short bush bash).

The biv is great! I have been there before and knew it would be good. It is a very clean "dog box" sort of biv positioned in a small beech patch: totally weather protected yet near beautiful streams and surrounded by a small beech forest. We got there around 4pm and relaxed/explored until 5pm, when we started supper. Darkness falls early in these little mountain valleys, and so we found ourselves sorted for bed by 7pm. Kathy forgot her reading material; I found that I packed and carried a murder mystery that I recently read. Solution: let Kathy read the novel and Bruce pretend to sleep.

By midnight, I was awake and looking for a snack. I heard a strange noise from outside the biv. This sounded for all the world like an alarm, but very muted and not loud enough to wake us. I traced the noise to my pack to find that my cell phone had set off an alarm for 11:59pm. I have little idea how this occurred, since I never really used the phone and

certainly never set an alarm on it. What strange sequence of buttons led to this? I am guessing that my sister who showed me how to use this phone did this as a demonstration.

The next day we were up and moving around 7:30am. The wind had come up and it was obvious that the weather might yet close on us. We climbed up the annoying 200m to the tops and took toll of the weather. It was windy and rain threatened from the west. We decided to delay any decision to the next track junction. Ruapehu started out mostly clear, and in that short transit became enclosed with rain. Wind and light rain hit us, but not in a seriously uncomfortable way. We were wearing windproof fleeces and hats. The big decision was to stay on the tops or bail out via the Macintosh Ridge.

In the end, we bailed out down the heavily (pine) forested Macintosh Ridge. I knew from an earlier trip that this was a very nice way to leave the tops quickly, though I had not actually done this track before. Well, the track was very nice and instantly protected by a pine forest. We descended down to a junction where one might proceed to Mackintosh Hut or continue along to the Lakes Carpark.

What struck me at this junction were the times engraved on the metal sign to get back to the carpark. The times given on these signs were generally pretty accurate (at least for me) and it showed that 3-4 hours would be needed to get back to the car. Looking at the map suggested 3hrs at most, and the evidence of the super fit guy we met supported this. Nonetheless, I concluded that the sign was accurate: there must be some painful up and down bits in the track that slowed things down. This in fact was true, but it was exacerbated further by some problems with the track itself and diversions. I should say that the track was always well-marked and left little doubt of where to go. It did not, however, match up with the track as marked on the map.

We wound up at the old Kaweka Hut site, where one might choose to go up to the tops or go to the carpark. The big shortcut track (clearly marked on the map) to avoid a 1km+ diversion was clearly not on the cards. By this stage, Kathy knew I was getting grumpy.

We got back to the carpark in about the maximal 4hrs predicted by the metal sign. I felt that going along the tops (at least in better weather) would have been less energetic, but

all up, we had a great time. We were: Kathy Corner and Bruce van Brunt.

## Saints Day 28 May

28th May is the saints day for St Bernard of Menthon - he is the patron saint of mountaineers.

And all the rubbish about St Bernard dogs having a barrel of whisky under their neck is rubbish! It was a small container of survival gear.



*The big house where he lived, near Annacy*

## Who has Done What 2015-16

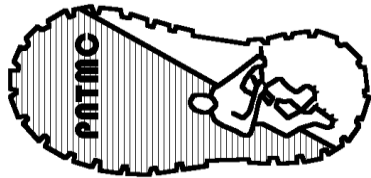
THE WHO HAS DONE WHAT list compiled by Terry Crippen.

Here is the "Who Has Done What" list for March 2015 to April 2016. It is an attempt to keep a record of what club members get up to (the cumulative list now goes back to April 2000); and to enthuse people to do different trips. It is also a list of who to contact for info about different places.

It follows the same format as previous years: i.e. it excludes the usual shorter Tararua, Ruahine, TNP, ENP etc trips; and concentrates on further afield trips, overseas, and multi-day trips. The listings are both private trips done by club members and longer club trips. Note that only members and past members names are listed plus some others, so a single name doesn't necessary imply a solo trip. As usual it is biased towards what club members have told me they have done. So no doubt they are many brilliant trips omitted.

NP = National Park, FP = Forest Park, CP/CA = Conservation Park/Area.

WHEN	AREA	TRIP	ASCENTS	Club Members, ex Members, etc
March	USA	Colorado, skiing: Buttermilk, Aspen Heights, Snowmass, Aspen Mt		Sally Hewson, Yvonne van der Does, Sue Pither
	Mt Aspiring NP	Routeburn Track		Woody Lee
	Nelson Lakes NP	Travers Valley, Robert Ridge	Hopeless, Angelus	Nick Allen
April	Nelson Lakes NP	Robert Ridge, Sabine Valley, Blue Lake, Moss Pass	Travers	Mary & Hannah Lund, Grant Christian
	Kahurangi NP	Matiri Valley, 1000 Acre Plateau	The Needle	Nick Allen
	Kahurangi NP	Tablelands, Cobb Valley, Lakes Sylvester & Iron	Arthur, Gordons Pyramid	Geoff Phillips
	Hawea CP	Timaru River		Chis Tuffley
	Mt Aspiring NP		Armstrong	Chris Tuffley
May	Molesworth Station	Severn Valley, hunting		Dwight Swainson
June	Lewis tops	Nina Valley		Nick Allen
	Kahurangi NP	Flora Valley & Cobb Valley, Tablelands, Lake Peel	Arthur	Angela Minto, Terry Crippen
July	Switzerland	Zermatt area	Breithorn	Barry Scott
	Queenstown & Remarkables	Telecom tower climbing	single cone, Ben Lomond	Nick Allen
August	Aoraraki/Mt Cook NP	Mueller Hut		Chris Tuffley
September	Northern India	Ladak, Lake Pangong, Khardungla, Changla Pass		Nick Allen
	Kahurangi NP	MTB Heaphy track		Chris Tuffley
October	Nepal	Khumbu Valley, Kongms La, Everest Base Camp	Khunde, Chukhung Ri, Island Peak, Kala Patthar	Nick Allen
	Richmond FP	Lake Chalice loop		Woody Lee
December	Kahurangi NP	Wangapeka track		Geoff Phillips
	Mt Aspiring & Fiordland NP	Routeburn Track & Caples tracks		Chris Tuffley
	Mt Adams area	Wanganui River, Lambert Tops		Hannah & Mary Lund, Grant Christian, Ashley, Jean Garman
	West Coast	Kokatahi River, Toaroha Range, Zit Pass, Crawford, Browning Range, Styx River		Hannah & Mary Lund, Grant Christian, Ashley
Jan, Feb	Te Araroa Trail	North Island part		Jessie Hyde
	Wanganui NP	Matemateaonga track		Chris Tuffley
	Mt Peel Station	Tara Haora Ra	Peel	Terry Crippen, Ange Minto
	Mt Somers		Somers	Ange Minto
	Hakatere CP	Cameron Valley		Terry Crippen, Ange Minto



Palmerston North  
Tramping and  
Mountaineering  
Club Inc.

[www.pntmc.org.nz](http://www.pntmc.org.nz)

P.O. Box 1217,  
Palmerston North

## PNTMC Newsletter May 2016

### *What's inside this month?*

- AGM – Election Results
- AGM Presidents Report 2015-16
- Toka Biv – keep it a secret
- A foray into the Kawekas
- 1000 Acre Plateau Easter Trip
- Who has Done What 2015-16
- Coming trips and more

### **Articles for the newsletter**

Send by the 20<sup>th</sup> of each month to Warren Wheeler  
the newsletter editor, via the club website  
<http://www.pntmc.org.nz/mail/>.

**Get out and about with us!**

### PNTMC Contacts

President	Bruce van Brunt	328 4761
Vice President	Anne Lawrence	357 1695
Secretary	Terry Crippen	356 3588
Treasurer	Warren Wheeler	356 1998
Webmaster	Peter Wiles	358 6894
	Martin Lawrence	357 1695
Membership Enquires	Warren Wheeler	356 1998
Gear Custodian	Warren Wheeler	356 1998
Newsletter Editor	Warren Wheeler	356 1998
Trip Co-ordinator	Janet Wilson	329 4722
Snowcraft Programme	Terry Crippen	356 3588

**Sender: PNTMC  
PO Box 1217  
Palmerston North**